

6th Quarterly Report



Community Initiatives for Common Understanding

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1. Introduction

Saferworld, in collaboration with Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN) and Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), is implementing a 3-year project entitled ‘*Community Initiatives for Common Understanding*’ (CICU), funded by USAID. Based on the assumption that constructive interaction and cooperation at the community level for peace and development can bridge political, ethnic and ideological divides, the project aims to contribute to an environment that is shaped by trust and strong social ties between communities, including conflicting groups and local authorities, which makes them resilient to social divides, insecurity and conflict.

The project has three expected results:

- **Result 1:** *Barriers to peaceful dialogue are broken down and mutual understanding and appreciation of grievances between conflicting groups increased.*
- **Result 2:** *Conflicting groups are able and willing to identify activities for development and reconciliation and collaborate toward their implementation*
- **Result 3:** *State actors at district and national level are better aware of and willing to integrate lessons learnt into conflict sensitive development and rehabilitation programming.*

While the project follows a community-based approach, it mainly focuses on 9,000 hard-to-reach and at-risk young people, including ex-combatants. Secondary audiences for this project are government stakeholders and decision makers at the district and national level. The project is implemented in 5 districts of Nepal: Kailali, Surkhet, Banke and Bardiya in the Mid - and Far West; and Sunsari in the East. It targets 3 village development committees (VDCs) in each district.

2. Context Update

In this reporting report (September 2014 – November 2014), the debate on the constitution-building process has been increased, as anticipated. The ruling party (Nepali congress) has proposed having 6 or 7 federal states in the country. This has been highly criticized by opposition especially Madeshis and Tharus. The *Unified Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist* (UCPN-M) led 22 party alliance initiated its protest program to create pressure on the government to adopt identity-based federalism in the country. The major political parties

have been conducting bi-lateral, tri-lateral and group meetings in order to come to a conclusion on issues such as the federal model, the number of federal states, the modality of government and other areas. Significant progress has not been made.

In this period, the pro-Hindu activities were observed especially in Terai district as well as in the capital. Some members of the ruling parties and *Rastriya Prajatantra Party – Nepal* (RRP-N) have been very active in their demands for a return to a Hindu state. One example of this is the organisation of a ‘religious assembly’ held in Dhangadhi, Kailali, by a Hindu religious group known as the *Vedic Sanatan Hindu Rastriya Nepal Sanstaga Sangarsha Samiti*.

As this reporting period, UCPN-M’s Secretary Netra Bikram Chand has left his position and has formed his own political party named CPN (Maoists). CPN have not formally announced another people’s war in the country but are threatening a return into war if their demands are not met.

3. Accomplishments

This progress report covers the sixth quarter (Q6) of the CICU project. During this period, activities under Milestones 9, 10 & 23 were completed and progress has been made in achieving other Milestones. In addition, the detailed Milestone Reports for Milestones 8, 12 and 23.1 will be submitted to USAID in January 2015.

The following activities were completed this quarter:

a) Milestones 9, Output 9.1 and 9.2 Conflict Mapping training and exercise conducted

In this quarter Saferworld and partners completed conflict mapping exercises in Singiya, Binauna, Chhinchu, Dhadhawar and Phulwari VDCs of all five working districts of the CICU project. The two day exercises aimed to bring conflict parties together to conduct a deeper investigation into the root causes of local conflicts and to identify common ground to address them. All together 151 participants (57 Female and 94 Male) were attended in the workshop where one conflict issue was selected from the action plans of Reconciliation and Development Forums (RDF) in each VDC. A conflict mapping methodology was then

designed around the selected issue which ranged from political polarisation, access to resources, clashes between youth groups, and gender-based violence (GBV).

Ground rules were established in a participatory manner at the start of the workshops in order to ensure mutual respect and confidentiality creating a safe space for all participants to actively feed into the discussions, a key aim of the exercises. The first day was dedicated to training participants on conflict sensitivity and participatory conflict analysis tools including; conflict trees, actor mapping, power analysis, timelines, role play and the Conflict Onion. On the second day participants worked through exercises to identify root causes of the problems and find collaborative means to address them by using the most appropriate tools from those discussed the day before. For example, in Chhinchu VDC of Surkhet, using timeline, conflict tree and actor mapping tools political party members agreed that the main reason for political polarisation was the domination of one party around access to resources; participants have agreed to work towards addressing this issue through creating action plans that are now being implemented. In Bardiya, where GBV is an issue, the conflict mapping exercise included a role play element, where male and female participants swapped gender roles to play each other in order to explore the power dynamics within families and communities that exacerbate GBV.

The conflict mapping report has also been completed in this quarter.

Note: The detailed Milestone Report to be submitted USAID separately.

b) Milestones 10, Output 10.1 Psychosocial strategy and directory developed

In this reporting period, the psychosocial strategy and directory has been developed through a series of consultations in project sites among youths and stakeholders including District Health Offices, Local Health Posts and likeminded non-governmental organizations. The main objective of this activity was to develop a strategy to reach out to target individuals and address their problems. During the strategy development, discussions focused on psychosocial health among youths, specific problems faced (such as sexual harassment, ex-combatants and drug abuse), structures available to address psycho-social issues, how these structures have been functioning, existing human resources to work in this field, capacity of the organizations and individuals (CWIN and individual psychosocial counsellors) among other areas. The directory and strategy is expected to begin addressing the local situation of psycho-social health in the coming days in project sites.

Note: The detailed Milestone Report to be submitted USAID separately.

c) Milestones 23, Output 23.1 and 23.2 CWIN and INSEC's capacity assessment and action plan developed

In regards to output 23.1, technical training in Do No Harm, participatory conflict analysis, and DDR training for project partners was also completed. The detailed Milestone Report will be submitted separately.

In this reporting period, capacity need assessment of SW's partners CWIN and INSEC has been conducted. Along with the assessment, the tentative action plans have been developed based on the need assessment of the partners.

The overall objective of capacity need assessment was to identify the technical and organizational capacity need of INSEC and CWIN and their project staff members. The specific objectives of the capacity need assessment was to prepare a report with an action plan to address capacity needs

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives following methods were adopted; desk study, individual interviews with key staff members in partner organizations, including Executive Director, M&E focal person(s), Finance and Admin focal person(s), and Project Coordinators, Regional Coordinator of INSEC from Eastern and Far Western region, CICU District Coordinators (DCs) of selected project districts and from Saferworld, the CICU Project Manager (Anil Poudel, now replaced by Ashim Pandey), CICU Project Officer (Surya Kumari Bishwokarma), Admin/Operations Manager (Kiran Thapa), and the Country Manager (Julie Brethfeld, now replaced by LaChelle Amos).

The following activities are currently in progress:

a) Milestones 5, Output 5.1.1

Initial meetings with the local partners have been completed in regards to producing a youth video documentary. A tentative script will be written in January 2015 and will be sent to USAID for their feedback. The documentary will be finalized by the end of March 2015.

Milestones 9, Output 9.3 Validation Workshop carried out involving at least 5 key community representatives from each of the 5 districts

The conflict mapping field data collection and initial report writing steps have been achieved and the validation of the data will be carried out in the first week of January 2015. The validation process will cover at least 5 key community representatives from each of the 5 CICU working districts. These representatives will comprise individuals who participated in the data collection process, including RDF members and local youth.

a) Milestone 27, Output 27.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance and quarterly events calendars

The 6th quarterly progress report and milestone report were submitted to USAID in December 2014. The CMM meeting is scheduled for January 2015.

4. Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Due to the effects and damage caused by flooding in Hariharpur of Surkhet, the reformation of Youth Groups (YGs) and re-establishment of Peace Rooms has been challenging. Similarly, the project faced high budgetary expectations from YGs while developing their action plans. The project has also confronted difficulties in conducting the planned activities in a timely manner due to the engagement of community members in other priorities, such as farming, festivals and social events.

Regular coordination meetings and visits to communities have created an environment of trust-building. Collaboration and coordination with VDCs and other government mechanisms at the local level makes it relatively easy to implement project activities. We have observed conflict parties taking ownership over the process of dispute resolution when the chance arises. The meaningful and active participation of women – particularly their role in information-sharing – has created a positive atmosphere, particularly for teamwork. The presence of district level stakeholders in community-level activity inspires and motivates local people to work collectively, through group consultations, one-to-one meetings and more informal on-going interaction.

5. Success Stories

During the cultural activity (folk song) and sharing of wishes on the occasion of Tihar and Chat festivals in Jhilmile of Chhinchu VDC, Surkhet on 4th October 2014, the girls (victims

of child marriage, domestic violence and divorce) sang various songs that detailed their experiences and difficulties faced as a result of child marriage. During the victims' performance, the offenders (mother-in-law and husband) were present, and listened intently. Following the performance, they expressed great regret for their actions. We are monitoring the broader impact that this individual performance has had on perceptions in Jhilmile. Likewise, Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC), an organization working in the district, provided RS. 1000 (one thousand Rupees) for coordination, which was used to provide the prize for the participants.

Flood victim Tilak Sunar lost his son 8-year-old son as a result of flooding in August, 2014 at Kachanapur-2, Khoriya. The government has provided relief funds to the victims of the flood. Tilak Sunar had not received any relief funds due to lack of information and knowledge of available support. The RDF team assisted him and visited the District Administration office, Banke with Tilak Sunar. Finally, Tilak Sunar received relief funds RS.100,000 on 23 September, 2014 from the District Disaster Rescue Committee (DDRC), Banke.

RDF facilitated the rehabilitation of flood and landslide victims of Surkhet district, especially of working VDCs. RDF members also provided RS. 51,001 to the DDRC Surkhet, received from Kathmandu Residency, Kathmandu. Meanwhile, health camps were also held with the support of Nepalgunj Medical College. Hundreds of flood victims received a health check-up service. Saferworld provided technical support to the process.

6. Quarterly Work Plan

Please see Annex A for a full overview of the Work Plan.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation Performance

In this reporting period, Saferworld and its partners INSEC and CWIN made monitoring visits to the project sites. The Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator of Saferworld visited Siraha and Sunsari aiming to discuss and orient RDF members, Youth Group members, and District Coordinators from partner organizations INSEC and CWIN about the Community Data Board. The Community Data Board aims to collect information about sexual and gender-based violence, substance abuse, child marriage, dispute resolution using the

community mechanism, dowries, theft, suicide and coordination meetings with police through the RDF members. The Community Data Board is to be placed in public places including VDC offices and in Peace Rooms. The information from the databoard will be used to analyse the situation of the local community and to increase the awareness of government stakeholders including police and VDCs. Through this information, concerned stakeholders can take the initiative to improve the situation.

In addition, a monitoring visit was conducted by Executive Coordinator of CWIN Nepal– Sumnima Tuladhar and Project Manager Dhruba Gautam in Surkhet district on 24 and 25 November 2014. Discussions with the District Project Officer and other stakeholders, including field observations, were carried out to gather updates on the progress and situation in field-level activities. During the visit, two Peace Rooms (Uttarganga and Chhinchu) were covered and discussions with the members of YGs/Peace Rooms were arranged. The discussion informed attendees of the Peace Room’s aims, with engagement from the local Youth Group. Our broader goal was to bring vulnerable youth together further cement stability in the local community. Appropriate feedback was provided in order to support youth initiatives through the Peace Rooms.

In this period, INSEC also organized three monitoring events in Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, and Sunsari districts. During the monitoring, workshops and training on the Facilitation of Conflict Mapping, and RDF meetings were observed. Discussions with local stakeholders, District Coordinators and Regional staff about the project's implementation status also took place. Key findings are given below:

- Coordination meetings were conducted with local stakeholders, RDF members and Youth Groups at the community level in project VDCs. RDF members of Pahalwanpur and Chaumala VDC of Kailali shared their ideas on working in the community, as well as their recent achievements.
- New action plans created by RDFs were shared with community level authorities (VDC secretary, police and civil society members) and community members.
- During the conflict mapping training, Key issues in Singiya VDC related to resources of RamDhuni Community Forest Users Group Singiya were discussed. Community representatives and local stakeholders committed to work together to resolve disputes.
- A coordination meeting among INSEC and CWIN teams was conducted in Kailali, where shared experiences and lessons learnt were covered.

8. List of Annexes

The Annexes included here are the following:

- A) Quarterly Work Plan

Annex A – Quarterly Work Plan

Milestone	Outputs/Activities Planned for this Quarter (September – November 2014)	Planned Timeline	Status (<i>Completed / On track / Not completed / Not on track</i>)
23. Partners technical and organization capacity assessed	23.1 Technical training in Do No Harm, participatory conflict analysis, and DDR training for project partners completed	Q3	Completed Report submitted in November 2014
	23.2 CWIN and INSEC's capacity assessment and action plan developed	Q4	Completed Report will be submitted in Q7 (revised from previous report)
9. Communities' have better understanding of existing tensions through constructive engagement in conflict mapping	9.1 Preparation and training for conflict mapping	Q5	Completed Report will be submitted in Q7
	9.2 Conflict mapping conducted in the 5 districts	Q5	Completed Report will be submitted in Q7
	9.3 Validation Workshop carried out involving at least 5 key community representatives from each of the 5 districts	Q5	Delayed and planned to organize in 1 st week of January 2015

24. Partners technical and organization capacity needs built for year 2	24.1 CWIN and INSEC's capacity needs for year 2 addressed	Q6	Delayed, planned to start in Q7
27. Documentation of project progress in year 2 on quarterly basis	27.1 Quarterly progress reports, quarterly meeting attendance, and quarterly events calendars	Q6	Completed
Milestone	Output/Activities Planned for Seventh Quarter (December 2014 – February 2015)	Planned Timeline	Status (Completed / On track / Not completed / Not on track)
5.Trust and more constructive interaction/dialogue established between hard-to-reach youth and other at-risk groups and individuals	5.1.1 at least one interaction in each VDC engaging beneficiaries; including the production of at least one short video documentary on a topic related to the conflict and/or conflict resolution	Q7/8	On track
9. Communities' have better understanding of existing tensions through constructive engagement in conflict mapping	9.3 Validation Workshop carried out involving at least 5 key community representatives from each of the 5 districts	Q5	Delayed and planned to organize in 1st week of January 2015
10. Psycho-social support mechanism is functional and selected actors have capacity to provide psycho-social support in	10.2. At least 3 orientations / trainings based on the localized needs and gaps identified under MS description 10.1 carried out for the actors working on psycho-social support from all 15 VDCs	Q8	Planned to organize in Q7

15VDCs			
18. District and national level actors have better understanding of existing tensions and means to encourage constructive dialogue in selected communities	18.1 Conflict mapping report finalized and shared with stakeholders from 5 districts and at the national level	Q7	On Track
	18.2 Youth video documentary shared with local and national stakeholders		
21. Mid-Term progress monitoring conducted	21.1 Mid-term review conducted	Q7	On Track